



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0377MN-1 for Brainerd Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has clearly addressed an articulated comprehensive and coherent reform vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The establishment of five strategic priorities with emphasis on communication, technology and the teacher selection process</li> <li>1. Recruit and develop quality teachers, leaders and employees to better serve students</li> <li>2. Improve stronger communication, engagement, and relationships with all stakeholders</li> <li>3. Communicate district-wide expectations for academic achievement, engagement, and student behavior</li> <li>4. Increase and improve the effective use of technology in all learning environments</li> <li>5. Utilization of financial resources in a fiscal responsible manner</li> <li>Career planning; this would be addressed through the effectiveness and application of improved technology</li> <li>Personalizing the learning environment; accomplished through systematic changes to the methods how students access and create content information</li> <li>Student choice increased in learning activities; teachers as content presenters will decrease substantially; therefore, increasing student choice as tied into the state's requirements</li> <li>Expansion of self-paced learning through acquired software programs; the implementation of new learning platforms will contribute to greater flexibility for students and teacher time</li> <li>Comprehensive plan to allow access to mobile devices; this will impact shortening the time to receive meaningful feedback from teachers, also this will add to the need to provide intervention means to assist students in this technological area</li> <li>Staff development commitment both short and long term;reform initiatives require staff initial training and ongoing support, this focus will increase opportunities to provide improved personalized learning, but also give the students assistance in areas of college and career readiness</li> </ul>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not address the specific process that determined the selection of schools; as indicated 10 of 11 district schools were selected with no information provided on the meriting of those participating schools and the one non-participant.</p> <p>The total number of participating students, who included low-income and high-needs, were identified in this section of the grant application.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant did not provide a descriptive, narrative plan that addressed the components in this selection criteria area. There did not appear to be descriptive information that identified elements that addressed scaled-up indicators that translated into meaningful reform measures.</p> <p>The applicant's submission in this section did not clearly indicate how the applicant will meet its outcome goals.</p> <p>The applicant provided information, in a bullet style and limited format, that identified "changes" in each of the four years within the grant. There were not present indicators that correlated those indicated changes to improving student outcomes for</p>		

all students served by the applicant.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

4

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant, in four separate charts, included data that indicated the projected goals for improved student outcomes in these areas:

- Performance
- Achievement gaps
- Graduation rates
- College enrollment

The applicant did not specifically address, in a narrative format, how its vision would result in improvements in these four indicated areas.

In regards to the optional item or post secondary degree attainment, the applicant indicated a formal tracking process that has implemented that is utilized to indicate data relevant to this topic. A partnership with a local college was identified that supports the application and acceptance process into this institution's career and technical education programs.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identified a clear record of success and conditions for reform with supportive charts, graphs and other data sources duly noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the state's first districts to implement a full day kindergarten program; this provided for a significant increase in each child's school day and learning activities at a critical developmental life stage</li> <li>• Quality Compensation Plan; this would contribute to an increase of morale and lessen the attrition factor while attracting better applicants for teacher positions</li> <li>• Literacy Model Program K-2; this program impacted the reading development of students in the primary grade while improving skills related to reading comprehension and word development</li> <li>• Multiple Measures Rating System; in reviewing data from multiple perspectives information can be addressed at each strand's level, thus impacting instructional changes that will better meet the learning needs of students; also this would close the measuring gap between at-risk students and the core population of students</li> <li>• Reading Recovery Program/Title One Support; this would also contribute to improving measurements to help allocate resources to needed buildings and programs</li> <li>• Gains in Proficiency, Growth, and Achievement Gap Domains; these improvements will help to increase growth in the achievement areas of sub categories</li> <li>• Data Review Utilization; used to review and understand the results of achievement scores that lead to changes in instructional practices</li> <li>• High Graduation Rate; higher than the state average continual growth in this area will contribute to more productive students while impacting college and career readiness</li> <li>• Renaissance Learning - Star Enterprise Assessments; implemented in grades 2 -12 this assessment establishes benchmarks and early indicators that can lead to better measurement of students' growth, which then affects curriculum issues or matters</li> <li>• ACT Work Keys Assessment/National Career Readiness Certificate; this distinction enables employers in the area to recruit and hire these highly qualified individuals</li> </ul> <p>The applicant did not clearly address making student performance data available to students, educators and parents in ways to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services, as indicated (c).</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>As referenced within this category, school level expenditures under the F-33 U.S.. Census Bureau guidelines and the State's statute, districts does not require disclosure of site-level expenditures. In compliance with the statute, the applicant annually holds a public meeting of the District's Finance Committee to review the requirements in their audit. In regards to adding trntansparency to district finances, the Community Budget Committee has been established and meets quarterly to address budget issues.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	7
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant has transitioned into a new network system that has contributed to the increase of current environments through technology; this contributes to increased computer applications that improve the ability to communicate and collaborate in the "cloud," and to connect to each other in ways that were not available even in the past year.</p> <p>The B-Integrated Academy has increased and improved the application of technology throughout the District to accommodate additional mobile devices; such as iPods, iPads, Netbooks, laptops, and Chromebooks. The increased and improved application of technology would also have a positive impact on the ability of teachers to personalize instruction with students.</p> <p>As indicated by the applicant, the State has imposed limitation features on aspects of the teacher licensure process and other restrictions that have negatively impacted elements of autonomy.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	4
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant has addressed aspects of stakeholder engagement and support in a narrative format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Plan, which encompassed 360 participants, and resulted in the development of five district priorities</li> <li>• Collective Bargaining unit did not provide a letter of support, but granted support by the majority vote of the governing board representation</li> <li>• School Board Resolution (a majority vote of members supported the proposal, as indicated)</li> <li>• Letters of Support, as noted fro various stakeholders, were made available in the proposal reflecting support to move forward with developing and increasing learning opportunities that promote the personalization of instruction for all students</li> </ul> <p>The applicant did not include actual copies of letters in their grant proposal from stakeholders.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2
(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant identified four categories in their analysis of needs and gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students/Impact on Learning</li> <li>• Teachers/Impact on Instruction</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Parental Education</li> </ul> <p>The applicant did not clearly indicate or describe a high-quality plan that would specifically address these needs. A high quality plan would fully describe each specific goals with supportive information that would include <b>activities</b>, <b>timelines</b>, <b>deliverables</b>, and <b>responsible parties</b> who would be designated to oversee each of the plan's goals and needs. In addition, supportive evidence that would contribute to a better analysis of the needs and gaps of the plan would include the criterion, if applicable, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the applicant's success in meeting the criterion.</p>		

### C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		

The applicant addressed a learning model that would transform the application of technology with emphasis on the student:

- Understanding Learning
- Making Choices
- Sequential Learning Utilization
- Alignment of Choices and Career Objectives
- Development of Critical Thinking Skills

The key elements in this area was focus upon tools, training and support for both students and teachers. The applicant identified a purchase schedule (pattern) that would be implemented during this four year timeframe that would contribute to improve its learning environment while meeting those goals identified within this section.

Areas that were not specifically addressed by the applicant within this section included the following:

- The development and link of goals to college and career ready standards
- Identifying a variety of high-quality instructional approaches
- Components of feedback and data to determine the success of mastery of college and career ready standards
- Access to diverse cultures

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	8
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identified several activities that are intended to create a teaching and learning environment that will benefit both students and teachers:

- Purchase mobile devices
- Invest in blended instruction components
- Teachers expanded access to technology
- Staff development
- Pilot a new set of data analysis tools

The applicant did not provide a detailed "high quality" plan to address each of these areas that include such factors:

- Implementation of instructional strategies and practices; focus upon individual student academic needs and interest
- Personalizing the learning environment; through teaching strategies that meet each student's academic needs and help ensure that all students can graduate on-time and be college and career ready
- Support progress toward college and career ready standards; developed through technology application and connecting with community resources
- Staff development plan and schedule focusing upon student achievement; technology access and resources, staff development, personalized learning
- Identifying high quality learning sources; focus on instructional content and assessment factors, partnerships
- The development of a rigorous curriculum; student choice, personalized instruction, application of technology and resources
- Teacher evaluation system; promote personalized learning, focus on student choice, college and career readiness
- School leadership teams; data-driven decision making, communication, and collaboration
- Closing the achievement gaps; assessment of data, technology application, parental and community support
- Teacher and principal development issues; specific staff development programs that improves their practices, evaluation systems, and improve the personalization of learning through technological resources

## D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	7

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant identified elements that supported this section:

- Central Office Personnel
- Long Range Planning

- District Policies
- District Grade Level Meetings
- Building Level Autonomy
- District Data Retreats
- Area Education Center
- SAAP

The information provided by the applicant appeared to address these elements and supported their policy and infrastructure accordingly.

The applicant did not provide specific information that related to the following areas:

- School leadership teams, which included their structure and purpose
- Providing students with an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and ways
- Providing instructional practices that are adaptable to all students, including those with special needs and English learners

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)

10

5

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicated the establishment of personalized learning environments as a major priority of this initiative. The *National Educational Technology Standards for Administrators, Teachers and Students* will provide the structure of the plan's design. A contingency plan of checking out computers to be taken home was indicated. The software, *Viewpoint*, was identified as a data source for personalized instruction that has already been successfully implemented to address this area in support of teachers and students.

The applicant has identified data tools (EVAAS) that will contribute to various aspects of online reporting that will add value to the District's schools and teachers in rating the academic progress of its students. The application of those technology software programs that the applicant has identified will contribute to the success of meeting its policy and school infrastructure goals.

The applicant did not provide specific information that would demonstrate that their plan, which was limited in its scope and development, warranted the level of high quality.

## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provided a plan that will address a continuous improvement process. The plan referenced training elements supported by NETS and a district level integrationist who will serve as the project manager with responsibilities related to staff development and curriculum alignment. The implementation of a teacher-leader team was also referenced toward providing a continuous improvement process in both technology integration and academic achievement.

Presently, several assessments are used to measure student academic progress and career success. The data tools designed for this program will provide teachers with information that will focus upon students academic readiness for college. In addition, the plan identified the importance of developing real world skills that will contribute to each students success in their eventual workplace.

The element of communicating all aspects of this plan has been established as a vital goal.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)

5

3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The *System Accountability Report* will contribute to communication with stakeholders. Also, the *We Are 181* publication will help provide information to these constituents. The PLC, board meetings, and staff newsletters will all contribute to ongoing communication efforts and engagement as identified by the applicant.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, whose teacher of record and principal are both highly effective were identified relevant to reading and math areas.</p> <p>The applicant identified the 3rd grade, 6th grade, and 10th grade with rational identified in areas of performance measures.</p> <p>The applicant will apply age-appropriate non-cognitive indicators in assessing student engagement and interaction. The data identified by the applicant within this section will provide a percentage of participating students, by subgroups, who are on track to college and career readiness based on their indicators.</p> <p>The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment and alternate assessments (MCA-Modified and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills are assessment test utilized by the applicant.</p> <p>The applicant identified elements of the at-risk population who would benefit through the implementation of blended classroom models and using learning tools that will be intended to increase student creativity and self-motivation.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The focus areas of training/equipment costs and effective methods of training were emphasized by the applicant.</p> <p>An evaluation team will be established that will assess areas of professional development and technology. The data gathered by this team will determine the needs and effectiveness of aspects of the plan. Both a formative and summative evaluation process will be utilized in gathering data that will determine professional growth and district-sponsored training needs that will help to meet the district's goals.</p> <p>The applicant did not specifically address strategies that include working with community partners, compensation reform, school schedule modifications, and structures, as duly noted.</p>		

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's budget information appeared to align with the intent and expectations of their plan. The allocations were deemed reasonable in supporting the elements and expenditures of the plan. The applicant intends to establish a fiscal management plan that will contribute to the sustainability of the plan. The allocation of a fund balance, as seed monies, were identified by the applicant. At the conclusion of the grant, the applicant has projected a significant reserve fund that will be developed to preserve momentum and opportunities the grant provides.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has established budget allocations and a fiscal commitment to sustain the project's goals, as previously indicated. The applicant addressed personnel considerations, staff development, and technology resources/equipment in their ability to sustain the plan.</p> <p>The applicant has plans to develop a fund balance allocation that indicates yearly deposits that will serve as seed money to sustain the project through the years 4-8. The applicant indicated the sustainability model for Personalized Learning with assigned funds set aside annually. The College and Career Readiness project will managed through the Career Center and School Counselors. The personnel and fringe benefits are considered as one time expenditures that will not</p>		

be sustained beyond the grant period. Staff development , conferences, and site visits will coincide with the regular curriculum cycle budget expenses. Teachers will have access to replacement computers beyond the grant, as needed. Student computer allocations are projected to decrease to 80% for replacement consideration. It is anticipated that in this timeframe of four years that over 20% of the students will be bringing their own devices to school. The applicant did not account for computer and software compatibility factors when considering the utilization of student's own personal mobile devices.

In regards to the sustainability of the project's goals, the anticipated changes and limited resources that will be allocated as already duly noted in the projected plan, will not replicate the original plan.

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	6

### Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has identified a supportive workforce initiative with the local chamber of commerce and local college. The success of this relationship initiative has warranted the development of the Bridges Workplace Connection and Bridges Academies. The Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program has also partnered with the applicant. In accordance with the applicant, letters of support with these entities for increased personalization of the career planning methods attest to the alignment of this request with community needs.

The applicant did provide performance measures that address the outcomes through funding sources, as indicated. The *National Career Readiness Certification* was identified as a specific performance measure in the plan.

The applicant did indicate elements within (5) that described the partnership relevant to building the capacity of staff in participating schools by providing tools and support.

The applicant did not clearly address how parents and families would be selected and involved in both decision making and solutions, as indicated.

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met

### Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant did not coherently and comprehensively address Absolute Priority 1. As indicated in the review process, the applicant lacked specific information, which included a descriptive narrative and supportive documentation, in several areas throughout the proposal. The information presented by the applicant was often vague, leaving out specific details how the specific selection criteria would be met. The proposal did not provide a high quality plan or adequate indicators that centered upon the establishment of learning environments that would be designed to significantly improve learning and teaching with emphasis on a rigorous and continual improvement process.

The implementation of personalized learning strategies that would meet the needs of all students that are based on their academic interests, were not clearly defined.

There appeared to be limited reference to increasing the effectiveness of teachers and principals through their respective evaluation methods; therefore, impacting their professional growth needs.

There appeared to be limited reference to mechanisms that would ensure training and support for high needs students and parents as to using the tools and resources, including technical support, provided to them in order to track and manage student learning.

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Total	210	112
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0377MN-2 for Brainerd Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Brainerd Public Schools has developed a proposal to improve student achievement and student outcomes such as college participation and workforce readiness through reform efforts focused on a strong educational foundation, high expectations, measurable goals, and teacher professional development. The utilization of a technology rich curriculum and integration of technology into classroom experiences provides authentic learning experiences through real world application in the context of content. The district clearly recognizes the need to prepare students for a global environment that uses technology in a variety of forms and through diverse applications in order to be competitive in the workforce and prepared for postsecondary success.</p> <p>The district also embraces a holistic approach to change and reform rather than sporadic interventions. While the proposal outlines clear targets for student success, the goals are low. The lack of success is a systemic issue with some content areas such as math and with specific subgroups such as special education. Analysis of the data finds student achievement is inconsistent and varies widely in grade levels. The application does not address how these issues will be resolved in a solid plan of action but rather from a general response. The lack of specificity in addressing some of the provoking data such as achievement in special education and postsecondary degree attainment demonstrates a lack of depth.</p> <p>.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district approach is comprehensive and inclusive of 10 of the 11 schools in the district. Approximately 4940 students will be impacted including high needs and students from low-income families. This approach is focused upon systemic change to the teaching and learning process with a focus upon technology integration. Both students and teachers/administrators will be impacted as a result. The implementation of an expansive model of reform that spans all grade level, contents, and all students particularly those with the greatest level of underachievement and lack of success demonstrates a commitment to the process and outcomes.</p> <p>The district approach is thorough in its approach to change. Through the development of model that will become the foundation for curricular change that spans the entire educational spectrum, students in the Brainerd District will have the opportunity to experience an in-depth and meaningful learning experience thus increasing the likelihood of achievement and success on other indicators such as college enrollment and degree attainment. The applicant has clearly addressed each component of implementation with a clear and precise description of the schools and participating student demographics.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Brainerd district has clearly identified the challenges and needs that are required to create opportunities for student success and improve achievement. The district provides data that demonstrates the issues begin early in a student's</p>		



educational career and continue throughout the process. This gap is even more evident when reviewing the data on subgroups and college attendance and graduation.

The LEA provides a list of activities that would begin in year 1 of the grant and build over the grant period. The list of activities appears to be general ideas without a specific focus on the students that were identified as those in the greatest need of support. The plan did not have a coherent or thoughtful process outlined in that some of the activities listed for year 2 would be better placed in year 1 (e.g., parent, student, staff survey on reform efforts).

The scale up was more of a phased implementation. The plan was a listing of activities not clearly or precisely linked to student outcomes. While it may seem logically evident that technology implementation and the use of digital platforms would enhance student learning, the goals should be more clearly aligned with specific student outcomes. A general perception that this model will improve student achievement and student learning outcomes is not a valid assumption or that gains will be made as a result of teacher use of technology in the classroom. There would be a stronger alignment and a tighter focus if each strategy was linked to a specific measure of student achievement.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	5
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(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has provided learning goals in the identified areas of need (e.g., K12 math and reading and subgroup performance) beginning with baseline data and projected performance outcomes. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in Math and Reading is the assessment used for growth and improvement for all students as well as students with disabilities and those on free and reduced lunch. The initial baseline performance data was very low in some instances (e.g., grade 7 math) and while growth was projected across the content and grade for all students and those identified subgroups, there was still considerable underachievement performance at the end of the grant period. It is troubling to see set outcomes that are very low at the end of the grant activities.

It is challenging to see the alignment of grant activities with a performance indicator of achievement of 53% for all students in Grade 11 end of course assessment in mathematics. How this performance criteria enhances or influences other grant performance indicators such as college attendance is not clearly addressed. While the district may want to set goals that are indeed achievable, goals that will accurately and with promise, show how real change can make a significant different in student achievement and long term success was not clear. There is no clear link established that indicates that the grant activities will improve student performance even at some of the low levels that are established by the district. The vision is not clearly articulated in such a manner that it is evident that student performance will improve as a result of the activities in other indicators of success.

The applicant has primarily focused upon state assessments as the criteria of success while other indicators should be considered as well. The performance outcomes are not ambitious nor rigorous and do not seem likely to make a difference in closing achievement gaps but rather exacerbating the problem for some populations including college enrollment and attainment. The applicant does not identify for college enrollment and attainment any data other than overall performance which has low baseline performance.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides information that indicates successful strategies for students such as all-day kindergarten. Research has documented the positive impact of full day kindergarten in subsequent student success and particularly for minorities. The district has made efforts to collaborate with external partners and entities, which are a positive strategy for community, buy-in and support. However, the limited success is evident in the data provided by the district. The achievement gap has not closed to any significant degree and particularly for subgroups, whose performance is most at stake and at the heart of reform.

The data seems to indicate a lack of success with subgroups and within all groups of students in some content area. The graduation rate, college attendance, and completion are low despite efforts prior to the application. The applicant has not identified measures or strategies that adequately address persistent underachievement and lack of success. The strategies are not aligned to any specific subgroup in a way that leads one to see the positive impact upon students. The applicant has not provided any data or evidence of how previous strategies or programs have had a successful impact

upon student achievement and success.		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	0
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant does not provide any record or information on school level expenditures stating Minnesota policy does not require disclosure in this format. The lack of information provides no clarity on current practices or policies.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant outlines preparation activities for large implementation of online and technology driven platforms of instruction and links this to personalized learning. However, this overview is not detailed or specified in a manner that demonstrates how this will actually occur. The lack of specifics and documentation of previous successes limit the application in terms of previous efforts to improve the quality and condition of education in the district that clearly has shown an impact upon student achievement.</p> <p>The notion of personalized learning is not clearly articulated in the application but rather included without explanation or context. The applicant acknowledges the limitations placed upon both the district and the classroom teacher in the use of selected technology and software without providing information as to how this issue will be resolved. This is a licensure concern and the district has not provided any resolution. General statements about student choice or self-paced opportunities are generic statements without any examples. The district provides examples of previous experience with a new science curriculum and technology but this is a limited scale compared to a full scale district scope of implementation for this grant.</p> <p>.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	4
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district embraced the strategic planning process during 2010 and 2011. Members of the community and school developed a district vision and priorities which served as a framework for this proposal. The development of this proposal was limited to district personnel. The lack of community involvement in the development of the proposal is a limitation. Education is a community effort and to exclude the valuable insight and opportunity to build deeper relationships with the community by not including or seeking their input is a loss. It is important to note the lack of direct evidence of support from the collective bargaining unit leadership although a majority vote by the board members did support the proposal.</p> <p>The lack of involvement and support by those who are directly involved with students and teachers is a limitation and indicates that deeper issues may be rooted in the community. Letters of support are included and range in both variety and representation but did not include parents, students, parent groups but rather community and local politicians, college and workforce development leaders. It must be noted the lack of local involvement in a proposal that directly impacts the students and families of the local community may have been an oversight or an indicator of other issues in the community.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is no evidence that a true needs assessment was conducted to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The needs that are listed center around teaching, learning, other needs, and gaps articulated in global statements. The identified needs are not the result of an authentic assessment of all stakeholders but rather generic needs that are applicable to any school division. Student engagement is a viable aspect of improvement and associated with greater student involvement and deeper learning and thus, improved student achievement and success. The application makes this relationship somewhat tangential in that teacher professional development did not focus upon student engagement, strategies that improve student engagement or the development of a curriculum that improves student engagement. Technology is seen as the conduit to improving student engagement while no direct training is provided. Student engagement may improve as a coincidence; however, the plan has to deliberately address outcomes and how those outcomes will be achieved.</p> <p>Evidence that demonstrates with reliability that engagement is realistic goal for student success and achievement as a result of the technology integration and infusion into the curricular areas is not clearly provided. The lack of data to support the needs is not provided nor are clear strategies that link to a goal. Overtly missing is any indication of needs related to student</p>		

achievement; the primary purpose of the grant proposal. There is no research or literature cited that supports some of the claims that are made (e.g., student engagement increases with access to personal digital devices or access to a self-paced curriculum is limited without access to school computers or mobile devices). The plan is not a high-quality plan as outlined by the grant guidelines nor is there any evidence that the applicant has the capability or experience to adequately develop and implement a project of this scope and caliber.

## C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has provided data that demonstrates there is a need to work with students in their academic preparation for college as well as assist in their planning to attend and subsequently graduate from college or other post secondary institutions. The application is focused upon technology integration across the K12 curriculum and infused into all content areas. The applicant has articulated this as need within the district due to a lack of technology and as skill set needed by graduates for competitive placement in careers and the global workforce. The lack of community involvement in the application limits the justification. Schools and districts cannot afford to operate as silos without considering the larger broader needs and perceptions of all who comprise their community.</p> <p>The district aspires to change the way students learn and articulated broad learning goals. The approach is very general and the goals are not linked back to academic outcomes or other indicators of student success in a meaningful strategy. Technology can leverage student interest and it would have been a stronger point of the applicant had specified exactly how this will occur. Specific strategies such as curriculum revision, development of online courses, e-books, flipping the classroom are all excellent ways to hone in on how technology can be used in the classroom with a positive impact. The lack of supporting information hampers the understanding of exactly how this proposal would be implemented. There is no mention of definitive goals that support an approach to learning that is high quality and ambitious.</p> <p>General goals that are not aligned to specific strategies and specific measures of learning outcomes are not likely to be achieved as broad approaches tend to veer off track early on in the implementation cycle. There is no mention of the target subgroups and other indicators that framed the proposal at the onset; nor is there any strategy that is articulated on how student data will be tracked and monitored. The applicant addressed this need earlier but does not seem to have a plan that develops in logical steps and progression.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application addresses a need of the school district to invest in teacher training specifically the use of technology and digital platforms of instruction. The model supports the research that finds that rich instruction and use of multiple strategies address various learning modalities and styles. The district understands that for students to be competitive in future educational endeavors and workforce ready then their graduates must be exposed, use, and be knowledgeable of technology as a tool. The district also acknowledges that teacher training is vital to the instructional process and that curriculum must be developed to support grant activities and ultimately, improve student learning outcomes. The application uses the term personal learning environments but has not provided any context as to what that will look like, how it will be developed, and how it lead to improved student achievement and performance. The investment in teacher training and professional development is a viable strategy and certainly one that is critical to changing the teaching and learning culture. The application does not provide any information on the training and professional development timeline or narrative of the implementation and more importantly, evaluation. Evaluation outcomes as a result of the training such as teacher practice, teacher use of materials, teaching use of strategies, use of technology in such a manner that fosters higher order or critical thinking skills is not mentioned. This lack of depth coupled with specific outcomes for students is an omission that indicates the proposal has not been clearly developed.</p> <p>The district does have in place a plan to develop an evaluation system and does acknowledge that data systems will require extensive training to build the capacity needed. The detailed plan of implementation does provide supporting information such as deliverables- what is not addressed is how this is directly connected to specific student learning outcomes. It would have been useful and practical to see a chart that addresses specific needs such as math performance and subgroup achievement. A focus on selected aspects rather than general goals that appear to be more hopeful in achievement rather than a deliberate approach would have made this a stronger aspect for the application. The plan is that teacher training will occur, technology tools will be distributed, and student achievement will improve; this is not a highly developed well-thought approach. While a</p>		

comprehensive and holistic approach to full scale division change is indeed a worthy model, the details still have to be provided and outlined to clearly address that each aspect and facet has been thoughtfully considered and aligned; this is lacking in the application.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	9
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A strength of the application is the flexibility and autonomy provided to individual school leadership to develop programs and processes around the needs of students that attend their school. While specific examples are not overly detailed, this point should be noted. The district has plans, policies and procedures that apply to all students and schools that are noted in the narrative that support the proposal such as online and internet safety. There appears to be a balance of autonomy and consistency with how individual schools are managed in the context of the larger district that allow for flexibility as well as structure from the district level.</p> <p>Central office staff support the schools in timely and consistent strategies to review data and address specific instructional issues. Some examples would have been useful that clearly articulated the role and level of support to schools and teachers as well as how the central office staff will continue to support new initiatives outlined in the grant proposal. The proposal provides a description of services for struggling students that is identified as a personalized learning environment; this seems to be more of support services for students with disabilities rather than an approach that is appropriate for all students. Plans that allow for credit recovery, self-paced instruction, online and hybrid formats, flipped classrooms are excellent strategies appropriate for this grant model. Little detail is provided and thus, one cannot determine the depth or level of the proposed plan. The plan does not outline specific strategies that can be developed and used with students with special needs or ESL students. It is not sufficient to state that the plan will provide a personalized learning environment for these students- how will the students be identified, what data is used, how is that data linked to specific programs and activities must be articulated; this is an omission of detail that does not support a high quality plan.</p>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	6
<p>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The plan the applicant has outlined provides resources to teachers in the form of professional development and technology devices. The district has implemented the infrastructure that supports a wide use of technology through enhanced platforms. The ability to utilize a wide range of technology both in and out of the classroom is a benefit for teachers as well as students. The ability to connect to a wide range of resources using technology is a strength and indicates a level of preparation that is both appropriate and timely. The use of various assessment systems to track and monitor student progress towards learning goals and outcomes is an excellent strategy that will enhance the opportunity to deliver learning to students for support and remediation as well as provide intervention quickly. The district recognizes the need to develop and implement a system that will provide long-term and longitudinal data; this is also a strength of the proposal. The application provides some insight into the kinds of tools and technology available to teachers and students but in an era of vast technology resources the list seems very thin in the development of the most current technology. The use of e-books for students, IPADS, apps, the cloud, are noticeably missing in the resources as well as the use of podcasts, YouTube, flipped curriculum.</p> <p>The level of support provided to students through various means--online coursework, online mentors, diagnostic assessments, self-paced- both in and out of the classroom is not articulated in a clear manner. The applicant superficially addresses support mechanisms for all stakeholders and how this process will be implemented. The applicant provides a narrow description in addressing a this section through a high quality plan.</p>		

#### E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provides a description of who will direct aspects of the plan and their role and responsibilities. The description</p>		

states that adjustments will be made as data are collected. This is one level of the continuous improvement cycle; however, the applicant does not provide specific benchmarks that will guide and focused the efforts of the plan in an ongoing and systematic manner. The development of a plan that provides specific benchmarks for each goal/strategy, and how each step is monitored as the grant progresses would have focused the strategies clearly and precisely. The setting of benchmarks that are evaluated yearly without considering incremental evaluation of progress towards the goals limits the continuous approach to evaluation and review. A phased in plan has both strengths and limitations; if the district does not have the capacity to integrate fully as quickly as they would like then identifying which target area to focus initially would help define the plan more definitively.

The applicant currently provides information to parents and the community and continues to use the same publications to inform stakeholders how the grant will impact student achievement and progress. The community may need additional information about the grant and impact since it is proposed that a deliberate change will occur in the teaching and learning process through curriculum, student expectations, and use of technology and digital platforms.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has a plan to communicate that appears to utilize the current practices as well as include other avenues for publishing progress. Much of the communication plan was focused on internal communication of staff, teachers, and administrators. The opportunity to inform parents at meetings, conferences, community events was overlooked. The proposal represents an investment in the community as a whole and constitutes external to the educational system--parents, students, local businesses-- seem to be left out both in the planning and future communication. Communication with all members of the community provides ongoing updates, documents progress towards achievement of the goals, and gains the support of the community in the education of their children in a deliberate and strategic manner- this seemed to not be a high priority in the application.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
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(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The district provided data on the ratio of highly effective teachers/principals for students in grades 3, 6, and 10 for reading and math. A review of the data finds that for grade 6 only 68% of the students are placed with a highly effective teacher/principal compared to 84% for grade 10 and 87% for grade 3. The applicant outlines academic growth for each age band that range from 1 to 3% despite real disparities in performance and subgroups. It does not appear to be ambitious plan since the low growth is the same for all students generally. The plan outlines measures, a rationale for selection, and goals for student performance for each grade band. The non-cognitive indicator of student engagement may be better utilized after the plan is implemented; the utility of assessing prior to the plan implementation seems not well thought out for the first year of the grant.

Students who are high performing should have a greater chance of doing better and students who need additional support would show even greater gains if there is a real and genuine effort to personalize the learning for each student. The plan outlines the state assessments as an appropriate assessment; the issue is that this assessment is an end of year or course test and other assessments that could be used in a more formative approach are not included with the exception of a reading test for grade 3. If K2 is excluded the applicant is missing an opportunity to provide interventions for struggling readers early on and use the grant activities to guide this early stage of development. There is ample research to support the notion that reading intervention must occur early on and not later. A not yet identified measure of student engagement will be used across all grade levels. Student engagement is the result of teacher training and professional development; while this is one indicator that would be appropriate at upper grade levels and other assessments for the early grade levels may be more valid. As well, engagement prior to professional development for this grant purpose may not be a useful measure for any grade,

The district is lacking in the tools to do an exemplary job in identification of subgroups of students for some of the required indicators and this is acknowledged. The plan does not address to any degree how these issues will be resolved.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	3
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(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district outlines a plan to evaluate components of the plan and provides a chart and timeline of activities over each year of the grant. There are strengths that are identified within the evaluation plan-- teacher feedback on bi-monthly intervals for example. This is an excellent strategy to monitor the implementation of a strategy and to assess effectiveness in improving student outcomes. Assessing professional development or other grant activities do provide a level of satisfaction; what would be more useful is to conduct a formal needs assessment, provide tailored professional development, implement and monitor the implementation of the professional development, and evaluate the impact upon the student. The plan does outlines some

of these steps but not in logical form of development. A plan with this scope requires a greater level of development since each aspect connects to another. Planning to deliver components that seem to be isolated of one another and that do not have a direct alignment to student achievement and success is lacking in quality and will be delivered in a manner that will be hard to determine what is effective.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant outlines high cost expenditures on salaried positions, training stipends and computers for teachers. The applicant does provide a budget that indicates purchases that are one time such as computers and those that are ongoing such as training; a rational and limited description is provided. There is little in the overall budget that seems directly focused on students. This is understandable if the applicant had provided details on specific training or how computers benefit the student or link to student outcomes earlier in the proposal.</p> <p>Additional information on how the purchase of online curriculum would be used, who benefits, and how this is assessed would have been useful in understanding the primary outcome-- student achievement. The district seems to have focused budget and monies toward a teacher centered plan; while teachers in the end have to make the changes that are needed for student improvement, this link and alignment is not very clear. The plan heavily supports teacher training and supplemental positions that will work directly with the classroom teacher to integrate the technology. There is not a clear understanding of how this will change practice and support the individual student through personalized learning.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district provides a plan that will put aside money each year from the district budget to sustain the momentum for several years after the grant ends. This is strength of the application since it is evident that the applicant has given thought as to how the plan will grow past the grant period. The set aside money of 2.6 million is a substantial investment in the grant goals and indicates the desire of the district to continue forward progress. The applicant does not provide an exhaustive description but does provide information as to what areas will remain a focus in years forward. There does not appear to be funding sources from other agencies.</p>		

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	8
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The district has a ongoing plan that partners with community agencies, higher education, and local businesses to collaborate on workforce development and skills needed for postsecondary training, The applicant provides a thorough narrative that outlines what has been done and what will be done during the grant activities to support high school students as they prepare to their future. The focus on high school juniors and seniors has shown solid results for this district. The grant proposal will support this initiative as well. The scope and depth of the workforce development plan demonstrates a level of planning that is commendable. The goals, outcomes, results and tracking are aligned in a tightly focused plan- this is excellent. The district acknowledges the issues that face their graduates- low college attendance and graduation; however, their plan to have student industry certified shows great promise. The plan to expand and serve as a model for other similar districts is a plus as well. Although the district did not provide substantial information on some aspects such as decision making and infrastructure it is evident that this aspect of the plan is strong, in place and on track for growth and success.</p>		

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
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Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant attempted to develop a plan to address to Absolute Priority 1 and in some respects had areas that were strong and viable in the application. The application was not a tightly crafted plan where one would ascertain how the goals, strategies, outcomes and evaluation were linked together with a focus on the student. The plan seemed to have isolated aspects that individually were sufficient but as a comprehensive plan was lacking. The benchmarks for success were not ambitious and the technology integration was not overtly linked back to student success. There was little mention of the impact upon subgroups throughout the application nor was there an emphasis on areas that stood out as problematic-- math, graduation rates, college attendance, and completion. The district acknowledges the need for change but does not have a clear plan of how the pieces go together in the articulation.</p>		

Total	210	118
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# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0377MN-3 for Brainerd Public Schools

### A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant's major focus is on technology and systemic reform for achieving a personalized learning environment. Four core educational assurance areas referred to but not made explicit in vision articulation.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>All schools and students in district will participate, except K-2 school and students (10/11 schools and 4,940 students). Exception explained as personalized learning environments are most developed at the K-2 level. Other details of implementation are not provided.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan clearly presents activities and timeline for implementation and scale-up regarding objectives, activities, deliverables, and parties responsible.</li> <li>Applicant notes that the proposed plan is patterned after earlier successful reform efforts in the district.</li> <li>No explanation is provided of how the applicant will improve student learning outcomes for all students (e.g., a theory of change or action, or a logic model).</li> </ul>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p>		

- Proficiency status, not growth, is shown in achievement baseline and goals for summative assessments.
- Improvement goals are achievable, but issue of why expectations (goals) for “free and reduced [-price lunch]” students are lower than for “overall” students is not addressed.
- Baselines for 2010-11 and 2011-12 and goals for the 4-year project and post-grant year are provided for overall, free and reduced, and special education regarding proficiency, achievement gaps, graduation rates, college enrollment, and postsecondary degree attainment (optional).
- Baselines and goals are not provided for students by race/ethnicity or limited English language.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	8
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments: Applicant provides clear evidence of increasing student achievement and closing achievement gaps as measured by state-level tests in reading and math. However, evidence of progress in improving student graduation rates and college enrollment is less clear. Information about reforms implemented in low-achieving schools or ways in which student performance data are made available to students, educators, and parents was not available in the application or hard to find.		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	1
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district does not make school-level expenditures available.</li> <li>• To the district's credit, a Community Budget Committee comprised of local experts in finance as well members of the school board and administration was formed in 2008 and meets quarterly to review the district's budget, promote an understanding of school finance issues, and increase trust in lean times.</li> </ul>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	9
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other than limitations of teacher certification, applicant does not identify any other state-level barriers for implementing personalized learning environments.</li> <li>• An example of sufficient autonomy and support for innovation, applicant cites work of the district's B-Integrated Academy to train technology leaders and integrate technology within instruction and the curriculum at all levels.</li> </ul>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	3
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of stakeholder engagement in the development and review of the proposal was limited to district administrative staff, although broader community representation was involved in an earlier strategic planning process at least somewhat linked to the applicant's proposal.</li> <li>• The local collective bargaining agreement did <u>not</u> provide a letter of support for the application.</li> <li>• Letters of support include, but are not limited to, the chief executive officer of the local chamber of commerce, the president of the local 2-year college, one state representative, and two US senators.</li> </ul>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	3
(B)(5) Reviewer Comments: Applicant's primary focus is on technology needs and gaps as related to teaching, learning, and curriculum. A plan for further analysis of needs and gaps is not included in application.		



## C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant proposes to use technology to shift to a new learning model that embodies the qualities of personalized learning environments. Emphasis is on transforming culture of teaching and learning through purchasing grade-appropriate mobile devices and supporting platforms, implementing self-paced curricula, expanding career readiness curriculum, and continuing assessments in math and reading.</li> <li>Applicant does not address: learner engagement with diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives; the role of parent support; strategies for the use of ongoing and regular feedback; or accommodations for high-need students.</li> </ul>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	8
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To achieve a personalized learning environment, proposal emphasizes the blended instruction by using and integrating both the classroom and the Web.</li> <li>Applicant identifies 5 sets of activities, including professional learning, to accomplish the primary goal of creating an adaptive teaching and leading culture that builds the capacity of people to lead and sustain change in the learning environment. Technology is the driver of the proposed changes.</li> <li>Applicant includes in plan an increase in the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.</li> <li>Applicant asserts that organizational capacity has been achieved in the district to "move to the next level" by focusing on people capacity, but evidence of organizational capacity is not provided.</li> <li>Applicant does not address the district's teacher education system as a source for information for improvement.</li> </ul>		

## D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LEA office is organized to provide support services and resources for all participating schools in the proposed project.</li> <li>It is not made clear in the proposal whether all learning resources are accessible and adaptable for various learner groups (including special education and limited English proficiency students).</li> <li>Applicant states that school leaders and leadership teams do not have jurisdiction over curriculum matters (which are district and state controlled), so it is not clear if schools have sufficient flexibility and autonomy to implement significant changes that impact the students' pursuit and demonstration of mastery.</li> </ul>		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant indicates that students and educators will have access to resources to implement the proposed project both in and out of school settings but does not supply details.</li> <li>Applicant indicates school-based stakeholders will have access to technology support, as well as open data formats and interoperable data systems, but does not supply details.</li> <li>No specific support is mentioned for parents or families.</li> </ul>		

## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant clearly identifies a range of suitable instruments that will be used as measures for assessing progress in project goals and for making changes for improvement during and after the grant period. These instruments include, for example: Instructional Practice Survey, a student and parent understanding-engagement-satisfaction survey to be development, Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, ACT Explore for career planning, and EVAAS which provides diagnostic information to predict student's academic success probabilities. Instruments such as these will be used as measures for assessing progress in project goals and for making changes for improvement during and after the grant period.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant clearly identifies ongoing communication (a) with internal stakeholders that includes staff e-newsletter, curriculum and grade-level meetings, technology leader conversations and reports at the building level, PLCs, district staff development committees and postings of training opportunities, and an all-employees annual meeting, and (b) with external stakeholders that includes accountability reports mailed to homes in the community, newspaper inserts and columns on school news and issues, and minutes of school board meetings and curriculum/student activities published in the local newspaper.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant identifies or proposes for development specific performance measures, along with a description of their rationale, rigor, and how they will be reviewed.</li> <li>These measures are clearly organized by "students overall" and by "student subgroup" regarding academic achievement (reading and math), non-cognitive growth, health and social-emotional engagement, and college- and career-readiness.</li> <li>Timelines for measure development or measure deliverables are not addressed.</li> </ul>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Plans for evaluating professional development and technology integration are provided, along with goal-related objectives, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties for each of the four project years.</p>		

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only RTT-D grant funds are shown in the four-year project budget. No other budget sources are identified.</li> <li>Applicant describes a reasonable budget plan for the 4-year grant, and treats all grant expenditures as one-time costs.</li> <li>Applicant's stated assumption is that the RTT-D grant is a catalyst for change and a resource for capacity development in the district.</li> <li>Applicant asserts that momentum of project can be sustained with district-only funding for the post-grant period.</li> <li>Major project costs are for 8 "integrationists" [to infuse technology throughout the curriculum], equipment purchases, and professional development.</li> </ul>		

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Applicant does not adequately explain how “budget set asides” during grant period will sustain project goals for the next four years. For example, equipment replacement costs, costs for maintaining technology infrastructure, and salaries and benefits for the 8 integrationists are not adequately discussed for sustainability.		

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Brainerd Schools partnership is with the local chamber of commerce and Central Lakes College for workforce development.</li> <li>Five performance measures are proposed and linked to partnership goals.</li> <li>Applicant describes tracking of performance indicators and use of data for capacity building.</li> <li>Applicant describes holistic perspective for partnership and its impact on students.</li> <li>Use of career-ready instruction and materials are described in proposal for meeting individual and community needs, and engaging parents and families in the process.</li> <li>Applicant proposes that the targeted number of participating students will increase significantly during and beyond the grant period.</li> </ul>		

## Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: Applicant does not provide sufficient evidence that Absolute Priority 1 is met, particularly lacking in high quality plans for how it will create learning environments which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators;</li> <li>are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements;</li> <li>accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student;</li> <li>increase the effectiveness of educators;</li> <li>expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and</li> <li>increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</li> </ul>		

Total	210	134
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